



FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF OCEAN CITY

410-289-9340

February 2026

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” So long, farewell, Auf Wiedersehen, adieu.
Adieu, adieu-To yieu and yieu and yieu.
So long, farewell-Auf Wiederseh'n, goodbye.
I leave, and heave-A sigh and say goodbye.

A last greeting from one of my favorite movies, The Sound of Music. I am leaving soon as February 1 will be my last Sunday in your pulpit. I have mixed emotions about that. I am excited about going back into retirement for the second time and being able to do new things and resume some old. But I know that I will miss the people here-I will not miss having to get up and go to work on Sunday mornings. And I definitely will not miss lugging my suitcase and bags of shoes, books, and medicine back and forth from Felton, DE to Ocean City. And back again. Load, unload, load, unload every weekend. It will be nice not having to live out of a suitcase anymore.

It has been a joy to be with all of you. Sure, there have been challenges, and a few elders have said they feel “shaken up.” That is a good thing because it means that I have done my work as an Interim Pastor. Thanks to all of you for your warm welcome and hospitality these last 22 months.

Some of you have asked what I will be doing in retirement. First, getting my new house in order- there are still things to sort. And I am excited about setting up a sewing room, and I will be painting the walls in that room first (Barbara & Betsy: purple). I will be resuming monthly meetings of the Quilt Guild and Book Club in Dover and starting guitar lessons (I played years ago). I have a Road Scholar (thank you Sue Latour) trip planned to the Grand Canyon for the fall, visiting my son and his family much more often in Richmond, VA and also visiting my oldest daughter in Newark, NJ. I will not be attending church in person for a while, but will see the Dover Presbyterian church service online. I can do anything I want-I am retired!

I wish you and your new pastor only the best. Go easy on him as he will be “learning the ropes” here in Ocean City.

Love, Pastor Debbie

Next Issue
Please consider
adding content to
this newsletter.
Thank you!
Deadline February
23 2026



WOW will meet Tuesday, February 17, 2026 at 11:00AM. Our Bible Study lesson is Part 2 Finding Our Joy. Lesson Five-The Gift of the Woman who was Poor. Mark 12:41-44 Joy in Christ is more than happiness. All women of the church are encouraged to attend and bring lunch to share in fellowship afterward. As the book club discusses their latest book, The Penny. See elsewhere in newsletter for details.



NOTE

The Grace Parker Breakfast is on hiatus until NOVEMBER 2026!

Grace Parker Breakfast History (Editor note-Not sure of date this was written)

The breakfast started when First Pres was still located on N. Division St. A group of women, who were long-time members of the church, wanted to be sure the new building was outfitted with a “suitable” kitchen. Grace Parker was one of these women. The group included Myra Gibbs, Hazel Taylor and Carolyn Quillen, also known as Circle One. The group arranged a no-interest loan from a member of the church to pay for the kitchen and gathered the members to put on pancake breakfasts to repay the loan. The first breakfast netted \$70. In time, profits rose to \$100 and continued to grow over the years. Today the breakfasts pull in as much as \$1,000 a month during the off season. Five to seven hundred breakfasts are served to people coming from as far away as Baltimore and up the Delaware Coast, each making a \$3.50 donation for the all-you-can-eat meal. Some read about the breakfasts in the Ocean City and Salisbury newspapers. Others heard about them through friends in Ocean City.

Preparations begin several days before with food being purchased and the fellowship hall being set up as a dining room. In all, they will serve 200 to 250 pounds of fat-reduced sausage from Holloway’s, an old time store. Mr. Ennis, using his own recipe mixes the sausages himself. (Another editor’s note: Mr. Ennis was a longtime friend of my grandfathers and located in Parsonsburg. When we went to Salisbury we ALWAYS stopped by the store for Granddad to have a chat with Mr. Ennis and the family to enjoy a huge hand dipped ice cream!)



Seventy-five pounds of bacon, seven or more hams, three cases of eggs, three cases of pancake mix, fifty pounds of buckwheat flour and four cases of one-gallon bottles of syrup were purchased. Cases of coffee, creamer, jellies, sugar, napkins, salt and pepper complete the supplies. “Nine times out of ten, we would not have any bacon, ham or sausage left.” according to Lorraine Rose, the daughter of Grace.

Continued on page 8

DATES TO REMEMBER

Deacons meeting The Deacons will meet on Sunday February 15, following worship in the small room off of Fellowship Hall.

Session Meeting The session will meet on February 17, 2026 at 1PM in Fellowship Hall.

UPCOMING PULPIT SCHEDULE

Sunday, February 1-Pastor Debbie's last Sunday

Sunday, February 8-Guest Preacher, Cindy Kohlmann, Lead Presbyter/Stated Clerk and head of staff for New Castle Presbytery.

Sunday, February 15-Pastor Jon's first worship service

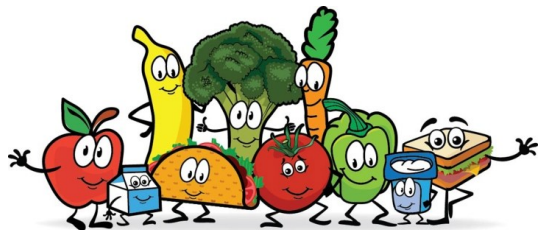
Please don't forget our 3rd Sunday collection for Samaritan Shelter!

We will be collecting household supplies on Sunday, February 15, 2026 to take to Samaritan Shelter in Pocomoke City. This has been a monthly activity of our church for many years. Household items such as dish soap, laundry soap, bath tissue, paper towels, zip loc bags, aluminum foil, etc. Anything that you need to maintain a household will be welcome. So please remember this when you are grocery shopping. Nancy and Rich Wright will be taking the items to Pocomoke to the Samaritan Shelter.. Thank you, Nancy and Rich!



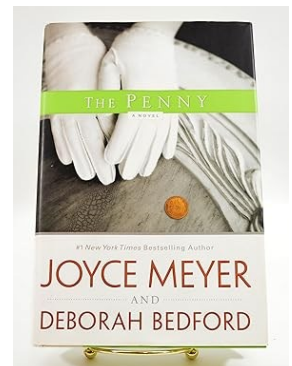
Lunch Bunch The Lunch Bunch will meet on Tuesday, February 24 at 11:30 at Pines Public House & Eatery, 11002 Nicholas Ln, Berlin.

Come and join us! We welcome newcomers and men don't be shy, you are more than welcome! Call Jan Phillips at 410-600-5631 and plan on being there. Bring a friend and join the lunch bunch on February



Book Club February 17, 2026 (Discuss moving to different day!)

The next book for the book club will be "The Penny" by Joyce Meyer and Deborah Bedford. From the book jacket: *Jenny Blake has no idea how her life will change in the summer of 1955. But the day she stoops to pick up a penny embedded in the hot asphalt, she starts a chain of events that will transform her life and the lives of those around her in amazing ways.*



WHY PASTOR DEBBIE IS A LECTIONARY PREACHER: WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

When I was in seminary, I learned about the Revised Common Lectionary, which is used by most preachers today. It is a 3-year list of Biblical passages (Years A, B & C) and at the end of the 3 years one is supposed to have read most of the Bible.

In the beginning, I didn't like this idea of someone, something telling me what to preach, so I was hesitant to use it. I had my favorite texts, and I was eager to tell my congregation all about THEM. But then I learned more about the RCL, and there are several reasons that I consider it to be an important preaching tool.

First, it is ecumenical. When my daughter's friend and I used to compare "notes" about what I had heard in my Presbyterian church and what he had heard in his Catholic church that Sunday morning, the texts were the same. We both loved that! It is more than likely that many of the mainline denominations in Ocean City are all using the Revised Common Lectionary.

Second, using the RCL forces me to look at texts that I might have passed by had I not been using it. In the beginning of the week, I look at all 4 texts. Sometimes I preach on the Gospel lesson and sometimes on the Epistle (which will be true for me on February 1. Cindy is preaching on the Revised Common Lectionary Gospel lesson on February 8.) Often I have preached on a Psalm or the Old Testament reading. I have 4 choices, and I pray about each one and come to the one that I think speaks to what the congregation needs to hear at that time. The Holy Spirit is heavily involved!

And last, and most importantly I think, the Revised Common Lectionary keeps preachers from "soapboxing" on their favorite issues. I am an advocate for 2 current issues: substance abuse and domestic violence. I worked in both fields as a social worker. So, if I constantly talked about Alcoholics Anonymous or the fact that batterers have learned behavior that they need to unlearn, my congregation members would soon get "sick" of hearing about all of that. Instead, I am directed to 4 passages, and none of them generally provide an opportunity for me to "soapbox." If those issues do come up, it is always in the way of an illustration to help reinforce the message of the sermon.

I am not doing pulpit supply for a time; I need a complete break from church "stuff." I am definitely feeling "burned out." But when I do return to preaching, I will always be using the Revised Common Lectionary.

Prayer Alert

Don't ever forget it is a wonderful privilege the Lord has given us, to lift anyone in prayer in the Name of Jesus, Who is the GREAT Physician. Praise His Holy name!



Our Lord wants to hear from us daily, so remember our prayer list as you pray daily! If you have a prayer request (no prayer is too big or too small for our Lord and King) please contact Beth LaBrunda at 862-266-6939.

Blessings, Beth



The season of Lent will begin on Ash Wednesday, February 18. Lent is a season of forty weekdays and six Sundays, which culminates in Holy Week. During this season, the church, in joy and sorrow, proclaims, remembers and responds to the atoning death of Christ. (From the Book of Common Worship)

FREE BOOK GIVE-AWAY-LAST DAY TO PICK UP IS FEBURARY 1.

Pastor Debbie is giving away a lot of books that she will not be using once she is retired. This includes hymnals, Bibles, commentaries, and Bible study books that can be done as an individual. They are now displayed in the one room adjacent to the main part of the Fellowship Hall. Stop by and look during the Fellowship time and take a few books home. The books will be there today only. Leftover books will be donated to Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond, VA. There are new books since January 18.



Sanctuary flowers

If you would like to dedicate flowers in honor of or in memory of a loved one, request forms are on the bulletin board opposite church offices. There you will see available dates for the entire year 2026 for chancel vases.

Baskets of flowers and bud vases of 3 roses are available any time. Chancel vases \$30.00 each. Basket of flowers \$40.00. Vases of 3 roses \$24.50.

Completed forms may be given to Marty Cropper. Thank you for helping make our sanctuary a place of beauty to worship with flowers praising God and honoring loved ones. Flowers are yours to take home.



February 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Worship 10:30AM	2	3	4 Handbell practice 5PM Choir Practice 6PM	5	6	7 Dee Lebo BD
8 Worship 10:30AM	9 Liz Mumford BD	10	11 Handbell practice 5PM Choir Practice 6PM	12	13	14
15 Worship 10:30AM Samaritan Sunday Deacons meeting following worship	16	17 <i>WOW 11AM Book Club 12N Session 1PM</i>	18 Handbell practice 5PM Choir Practice 6PM	19	20	21
22 Worship 10:30AM	23	24 Lunch Bunch 11:30AM	25 Handbell practice 5PM Choir Practice 6PM	26	27	28

Revised Common Lectionary Readings for:

Sunday, February 1-4th Sunday after Epiphany

Micah 6:1-8

Psalm 15

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

Matthew 5:1-12

Sunday, February 8-5th Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 58:1-9a [9b-12]

Psalm 112:1-9 [10]

1 Corinthians 2:1-12 [13-16]

Matthew 5:13-20

February 15 -Transfiguration of the Lord

Exodus 24:12-18

Psalm 2 or Psalm 99

2 Peter 1:16-21

Matthew 17:1-9

February 18-Ash Wednesday

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 or Isaiah 58:1-12

Psalm 51:1-17

2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

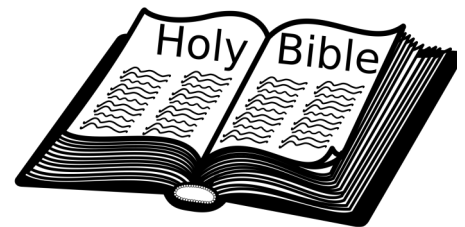
February 22-1st Sunday in Lent

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

Psalm 32

Romans 5:12-19

Matthew 4:1-11



Revised Common Lectionary-One More Time

The Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) is an ecumenical resource for fostering a shared worship. It draws on older lectionaries, particularly the Roman Catholic Lectionary and the Consultation on Common Texts (CCT), to offer a three-year cycle of readings. Each year covers the Old Testament, Psalms, Epistles, and Gospels. It aims to encourage a more consistent approach to Scripture readings, fostering greater unity among Christian traditions while honoring diverse worship practices.

YOU ARE INVITED TO A RETREAT IN 2026

Any member of First Presbyterian in Ocean City can attend! It's great fun!

March 5-7 in Dewey Beach. Registration now open!

What's planned for the retreat?

What's planned for the retreat?

- Discuss the Presbytery new structure
 - Learn how the new structure will move toward revitalization of our churches, our youth and more!
 - Collaborate with fellow church leadership AND members to be a part of it!
- Receive a \$100 reimbursement after the event for 3 or more attending from your church

An advertisement for the 2026 Annual Bay Retreat. At the top is the New Castle Presbytery logo, a colorful circle with a flame and a cross. Below it, the text reads 'New Castle Presbytery' and '2026 Annual Bay Retreat' in large blue letters. The dates 'March 5, 7:00p to March 7, 12:00 noon' are listed below. The theme 'SHARED MISSION & MINISTRY' is in bold. Three circular portraits of the leaders are shown: Rev. Dr. Laurie Ferguson (Program Leader), Farnaz Ansari (Boundary Training Leader), and Rev. Dr. Mark Parsons (Worship/Musician Leader). At the bottom is a photograph of Hyatt Place hotel buildings by the water. The address 'Hyatt Place, 1301 Coastal Highway, Dewey Beach, Delaware' and the website 'www.NCPresbytery.org/Retreats' are provided, along with a QR code.

As time passed Grace became less involved with the physical functions of the breakfast. She attended them until her health prevented it. Prior to her death in 1986, she received a solemn promise that the breakfast would continue. Her daughter and favorite son-in-law Lorraine and Darrell Rose, assumed this task and have continued over the years. In addition to our congregation volunteers, we are blessed with helpers from other churches in the area. Proceeds from the breakfast still keep the kitchen stocked, repaired and cleaned. However, some of the monies go to our student scholarship fund sponsored by the Presbyterian Women's organization of the church. The Grace Parker Breakfasts are held the first Wednesday of each month from November to March. Come join us for food and fellowship and meet a community of friendship.

Cheryl Gibbs (Myra Gibbs granddaughter)
Commentary-Lorraine Rose (Daughter of Grace Parker)
Assisting comments-Betty Jane Gibbs Datesman (Myra Gibbs daughter)

Session Humor-At the Pastor Debbie's last session meeting before she rides into the sunset of retirement, she treated the session members that she had served with during her interim at OCPC to a few whimsical gifts!

Bill Owens Back in April, someone told me that you were mowing your grass. I looked at the grass at the manse, and it was still brown, but getting greener. I questioned why you were mowing. A person, who shall remain nameless, said that you have to make sure that every blade of grass is exactly the same length. Open gift-**ruler**



Marty Cropper-I know you love to quilt, and this gift was a free one from the public library. I hope you enjoy looking at it. Open gift-**Free book on quilts around the world.**

Chris Greenwood-You will have to keep this one for next December's Grace Parker Breakfast. Open gift-**And I do expect you to wear this-a red apron with snowflakes on it.**



Barbara Kipila-For all of you here, what do you always, always see Barbara with? Anyone guess? Open gift-**You can take it back to Goodwill if you would like, a sweater. She is going to wash and wear it.**

Vicky Cairns-I love you to death, but you are always at least 5 minutes late for everything. I used to be like that until I became a pastor. When I was a chaplain in a retirement community, I had a resident named Vera Sheely, who was always 5-10 minutes late for everything we did. We learned to expect and accept that. She once told me about being late, "I always think I have time to do one more thing." Open gift-**Clock**



Nancy Wright-There is no one in this church who has brought me more food and gifts than you. From sugared pecans to a housewarming gift to the Gullah Bible from Charleston. There were times that all I felt like I was doing was writing you thank you notes. I hope that you continue to shower your blessings on your new pastor. There are 2 gifts and I will explain the second one. Open gifts-**Chintsy TP from Staples, even though best brand. Next a Rubbermaid container and a roll of good thickness toilet paper.**



Mabel Rogers-This gift will be self-explanatory. I hope it helps you down the road. Open gift-**Article "The Art of Saying NO"**

Jan Owens-I have not used what I am giving you since my youngest daughter, who is now 45 years old, was a baby. She had constipation, and a nurse told me to give her this. I am giving it to you so you can use it to French Toast Casserole, for the international students which is why I bought this. It does not expire until December of this year. Open gift-**partially used bottle of white Karo Syrup.**



A photograph of a sunset over a beach. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm glow across the sky and reflecting on the water. The sky is filled with soft, wispy clouds. The beach is visible in the foreground, with gentle waves lapping at the shore.

*Farewell Pastor Debbie!
Best wishes in your new home-
and retirement!*

A photograph of a sunset over a beach, similar to the one above. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm glow across the sky and reflecting on the water. The sky is filled with soft, wispy clouds. The beach is visible in the foreground, with gentle waves lapping at the shore.

Welcome Pastor Jon and Sally!

*The Reverend Doctor Jon L.
Berquist*

Reverend Sally Willis-Watkins